



## BOSTON RECORDER.

THURSDAY, JAN. 19, 1843.

## HEARING THE WORD.

God speaks to man. He uses man's mouth. Instruction comes from him in language intelligible to all, and with an authority that claims universal reverence. The imperfection of the medium of communication affects not the obligation to hear and obey; for that imperfection, however great, does not diminish the force of truth itself, as revealed with "many infallible proofs," in the Lively Oracles. In them we have a standard by which we test with certainty the claims of every uninspired teacher to our confidence, as a commissioned messenger from heaven.

And, who is he that speaks to man, but the same being that tries the reins and searches the heart, that he may give unto every man according to his deeds—the Maker and Preserver of men—the Ruler and Judge of the world, on whose lips hang the destinies of all intelligent? No wonder that the children of Israel, when commanded to come into his immediate presence and receive the Law, exclaimed, "Why should we die? This great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the Lord God any more, then shall we die!" Even Moses feared and quaked. It is a milder glory than that of Sinai, in which God now appears—a softer effulgence illuminates the sanctuaries of the saints than that which wrapt all Horeb in a blaze; yet God is still the same, in his hatred of the "accused thing," in his jealousy for his own glory, and in his determination to vindicate his government from the aspersions of his enemies. And when men listen to his words, falling from the lips of their fellow men, it is all in vain, unless they admit the fact, that God is in the midst of them—that he is a holy God who cannot look upon iniquity—a God whose eyes search them, as his arm upholds them, and who holds them responsible in life, death, and the Final Judgment, for their treatment of his messages.

The word of God is to be received with all meekness and lowliness of mind—not with impatience, captiousness, and a disposition to cavil, such as often appears in the self-conceited and vain. Many there are who enter the house of God, believing themselves to be "wiser than their teachers," and independently competent to decide on every point of doctrine or duty, and who take the posture of critics rather than learners, and assume the lofty air of the master rather than the humble demeanor of the disciple. These are such as are ever learning, but never come to the knowledge of the truth. The injunction of the Apostle is to them overlooked—"If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise;" i.e. let him dismiss his vain speculations, and idle self-conceits, and sit quietly at the feet of the teachers God has sent him. Instead of this, and content with a few broken fragments of scriptural knowledge, collected without labor, preserved without order, and displayed without judgment, they deem themselves qualified to pronounce authoritatively upon the exhibitions of God's truth, and receive or reject the messenger of God, as their humor or caprice shall dictate. Till such men become foolish in their own eyes, they will never attain true wisdom, nor even begin to learn the alphabet of Christian experience.

"As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby," saith an Apostle. As if in bold defiance of this direction, there are many who heed to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and who say to the prophets, "prophecy to us smooth things, prophecy deceits." Though they turn not away the foot from the house of God, nor altogether neglect to "search the Scriptures," yet they have no love for "the sincere milk of the word," and retain the outward forms of respect to it, only for the quiet of conscience, or the enjoyment of intellectual pleasures, or the furnishing themselves with matter for debate and contention against the truth. If they seem pleased with the casket, they undervalue the jewel within it; if they cast not away the forms of religious observance, they contemptuously reject the substance.

Integrity of heart and simplicity of faith require that the Word be heard, "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God." The Scriptures bear the indelible imprint of Divinity, in the spirit of prophecy they reveal, the miracles they record, and in the perfect congruity of their instructions with reason, fact, and experience. And when men speak according to this word, the truth is in them. "The Law and the Testimony" are the standard of final appeal—not a cunningly devised fable, as is practically affirmed by the multitudes who appeal from the instructions of their religious teachers to the voice of Reason, or of prejudice, or of lust. When the religious instructor can truly add a "Thus saith the Lord," to his inculcations of doctrine or duty, it is enough—his words are disregarded only at the peril of all that is precious in "Glory, Honor, and Immortality."

"Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; teach a just man, and he will increase in learning." The state of the heart, though commonly overlooked, as having any thing to do with hearing the word of God, is in fact the point of primary concern. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he"—and such is his acceptance or rejection of the word. Yielding himself to the dominion of corrupt affections and depraved appetites, he has no security against the doom of everlasting ignorance, though he attend on the ministrations of the Gospel all his days. So long as his ruling passion is the love of error, he will not come to the light, nor understand the will of God, because his deeds would thereby be reproved. It is the heart of the prudent that getteth knowledge, and the ear of the wise that seeketh knowledge;" and a fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself." Nor is it more true, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," than it is, that without holiness no man shall ever hear the word of God with edification and profit.

The whole truth is to be received with child-like docility, nor can one doctrine of the Bible be consistently admitted while another is rejected—not one duty fulfilled, while another is discarded. All issues from the same authority—point to the same end, and form in their mutual connexion and dependence, an harmonious and perfect system. And it may be doubted, whether any thing contributes more directly to the careless indifference—and even the open opposition of multitudes to the truth, than the unfaithfulness of believers, in their examination of the word of God, and their slowness

of heart to believe all that the prophets and apostles have spoken.

And if there be also a readiness to obey the will of God when once made known, there will be little difficulty in ascertaining it. What man is unwilling to do, he is equally unwilling to believe himself under obligation to do, and hence is unwilling to receive that truth which explains and enforces the obligation. "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves;" he who is "not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." Of many who hear the word of the Lord, and promise to obey it, God may say, as of Israel of old, "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me and keep my commandments always, that it might be well with them and their children forever."

Finally, if any man lack wisdom let him ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraidth not, and it shall be given him. Humble and earnest prayer will never fail to bring down light from heaven on the inspired page, and dissipate whatever darkness may gather around the mind of the enquirer after truth. The wayfaring man though a fool shall understand, when his desires are attracted by a port of ease or pen, constructed at the end of a woodless, facing upon the road. The thought occurred, that it might be the cage of an insane person. We dismounted and approached the place, and, looking through the bars, found it was a cage about six feet square. The floor was covered with trampled straw; and we saw only an old, ragged, gaunt, and decrepit animal, like a dog, who had been locked up there narrowly at this; a sudden motion of one side of its dislocated head and face of a human being, which were hidden again, as soon as the glaring eyes had been fixed for an instant upon us.

The first shock was too painful to be described; to find humanity so utterly degenerated, to see a human being crouching like a wild beast in his lair, caged up by the side of the public highway, and gazing everywhere with an unwholesome, unshaven, unkempt, and dirty aspect, was revolting beyond measure.

Having found the keeper of the house, we unfastened the door of the cage and entered it. There was no article of furniture at all; nothing but the straw, with here and there a stale crust of bread. The animal was crouching in the corner, and could not move in the smallest possible space; he would not speak nor move except when we attempted gently to uncover his head, which he would bury in the folds of his rotten coverlet, and by his motions disclose to sight his naked limbs. We made some inquiries concerning his history, and found, that he was about forty years old; that he had once been the owner of a small farm in the neighborhood; that he had suffered, or supposed he had suffered, greatly wrong, and had been a maniac; and had been a member of a sect, but was returned upon the town as incapable, and put into this den, probably for life. The keeper did not seem to be an inhuman man, but was ignorant, and utterly unfit for the care of the insane. On being asked, how he managed him, he replied, that he had now no difficulty, and had not "locked him for over a year!"—that at first he "had a fight with him, and had to knock him down, and then he had to tie him up"; and that "he had suffered, and that since he had been obedient," and that "since then he had been obedient." He added, however, that the overseers of the poor had charged him never to strike the man again."

And this in Massachusetts, and within thirty miles of Boston. How true is it that one half the world know nothing of how the other half live. It is impossible in the nature of the case, that the insane can be properly provided for almshouses and jails. Nay, they must, under such circumstances, become worse. How many are the cases, which the philanthropic enterprise of the Worcester Hospital has developed, in which poor destitute or deserted victims of insanity have been brought out of a long and miserable confinement in a filthy dungeon, and restored to comparative happiness and comfort, and even to a right mind, where the mind had not been totally destroyed by the barbarous treatment under which it had been oppressed. And how is it with those considered incurable—and there are a great many of them—who have, for want of room, and to make way for others, been discharged from what had become to them a comparatively comfortable and happy home, and again sent back to their cages and prisons? The writer in the Review gives one case, which is probably but a specimen of many—

Elizabeth Stevens, aged about 40 years, was formerly confined as a lunatic in a jail; and was as wretched, wild, and ungovernable as such persons usually are, in such places. Five years ago, she was sent to Worcester, where she was placed in a roomy house, with a maid, Mrs. S., kept her room and her person tidy; she was never violent; would employ herself in knitting; attended church regularly, and, up to the 10th of October last, behaved with propriety. On the 12th of October, she was removed, to make way for others, and carried to the jail of the town. The sight of this roused her to fury, and she refused to enter; but she was carried in by force, and became again a raving lunatic. Since then, she has been broken in body, broken in spirit, torn her straw bed, smashed her headboard and her windows, stripped off her clothes, attacked the keeper with an iron grate, and committed every possible outrage; the result will be, that she must be chained up, or confined in a cage!"

## INSANITY IN MASSACHUSETTS.

We alluded in our last to an article in the January number of the North American Review, on the subject of Insanity. The article has immediate reference to our own State, and contains some suggestions—urged with a most praiseworthy zeal—which are entitled to immediate consideration; and presents some startling facts, which must awaken the sympathies of all who do not shut their eyes against them. They turn not away the foot from the house of God, nor altogether neglect to "search the Scriptures," yet they have no love for "the sincere milk of the word," and retain the outward forms of respect to it, only for the quiet of conscience, or the enjoyment of intellectual pleasures, or the furnishing themselves with matter for debate and contention against the truth. If they seem pleased with the casket, they undervalue the jewel within it; if they cast not away the forms of religious observance, they contemptuously reject the substance.

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For these 500 the writer ardently pleads—How they are now cared for may be learned by several specimens of treatment which he gives—cases which he himself witnessed, during the last three months, in places within thirty miles of Boston. We can cite only one case—

The State of Massachusetts, its noble establishment at Worcester, for 229 patients, but the poor do not have the sole benefit of this; and the County of Suffolk provides for 100 more, in its commodious and excellent Hospital at South Boston. The others, over 500 in number, are, for the most part, in almshouses and jails."

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## PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

We are indebted to Moses Grant, Esq. for a copy of a document presented by him to the Common Council, relating to the public institutions at South Boston, the Houses of Industry, Correction, and Reformation. These institutions justly occupy a large share of public regard, and are sources of great public expense. They contain a large number of human beings, who are guilty of vice and crime, and provide for their reformation.

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## WASHINGTON'S PIETY.

The memory of Washington is dear to every American. The more his character is studied, and his principles and motives of action understood, the more will that character be found worthy of admiration and imitation. Washington's religion was truly a practical religion; and there have been very few—if any—public men in whose official acts piety was so uniformly and constantly exemplified. The age in which he lived was by no means a perfect age, nor was it free from those temptations and seductive influences, which now draw so large a majority of our public men into the vortex of irreligion and infidelity. Washington was not even exempted from the baneful spirit of party. It was amidst the same unshaken influences with which our public men are now called to contend, that Washington's piety shone out in all his official and private conduct; and it was by trials and tests of virtue, more severe than fall to the common lot of man, that the character was formed which will be an undying example to those who rule the destinies of nations. Who can calculate the influence which an imitation of this example by our public men, would now have, in controlling the great interests of this country.

In the House of Industry, it appears there

are 639 inmates; 247 men, 188 women, 167 boys, and 67 girls; being 71 more than were in the House at the same time last year, and more than at any former period, with one exception.

The new hospital connected with the establish-

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## EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES.

*Curious Questions of Cicero.—Mr. Dillaway has added to his valuable series of classical works, this most interesting of Cicero's philosophical writings. It is comprised in two small volumes, and printed in the same beautiful manner which has justly characterised the other publications of this series. Mr. Dillaway has added copious notes to this edition, for the use of schools. It is certainly a most desirable work to be introduced into our schools and academies, showing, as it does, the state of mental philosophy at the time when it was written, and involving topics the most essential to man's happiness.*

*Nautus.—Mr. Dillaway has also prepared an edition of two of the plays of Plautus. The one of Plautus excels in briskness of dialogue as well as purity of expression, and this selection gives a good specimen of his powers. The Aulularia and Aulularia have been selected for volume. Mr. Dillaway has done much towards the advancement of classical literature in the publication of these volumes, and we hope may attract the notice of our learned men. Our publications may be had of Tappan and Son.*

*Boston Review 1842.—A brief history of the ecclesiastical churches of Boston, together with a particular account of the Revival of 1842, by Martin Moore, published by John P. Tappan.*

This little work commences by showing the churches around Massachusetts Bay founded in the spirit of Revival; briefly gives the "great awakening" of 1842; and describes the return of evangelical religion to its former strength. It contains a mass of facts of deep interest to every Christian in this city, and to others who are interested in the return of the Puritans to Boston. It gives an impartial account of the Revival of 1842, as it appeared in the churches of different evangelical denominations. The author has made use to collect and arrange the facts, and we trust that his book will obtain a wide circulation among all evangelical denominations.

*Sabbath Evenings.—A collection of original selected Airs, arranged for one, two, three or voices, have just been issued, in a most beautiful style, by Messrs. Oakes and John Ash & Co. The series will consist of twelve pieces, five of which have already been issued.*

*CODIFICATION OF THE GENERAL AGREEMENTS OF THE STATE, Boston, Jan. 18, 1842.*

[For the Boston Recorder.]

## LAYING ON OF HANDS.

*Mrs. Eborac.—In the imposing account*

*which I have read, of the consecration of Rev. Dr. Eastburn as Assistant Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Massachusetts, I observe, that several Bishops placed their hands on the head of the Reverend gentleman, saying—"Receive ye the Spirit of the Holy Ghost." I am inclined to convey the impression that the Holy Ghost was imparted to their brother by the touch of their hands? Or is this only a form? I am somewhat curious in all matters pertaining to religious rites, and so would esteem it a great favor if you, or some of your correspondents, would inform a plain man what this expression RUSTICUS.*

*ECCLESIASTICAL.*

*DEDICATION.—In Bliehill, Ms., a new house of worship, erected by the Congregational Society, was dedicated to Almighty God, on Wednesday, the 11th inst. Invocation and Reading the Scriptures by Rev. James Gilpatrick, of Bliehill; Introductory Prayer by Rev. Jonathan Fisher (former pastor); Sermon by Rev. Joseph Sewall, Jr., officiating Pastor, from Haggai 2: 9; Prayer of Dedication by Rev. Sewall, of Ellsworth; Benediction by the Pastor.*

The services of this occasion were highly interesting throughout; and, although the travelling was bad, a crowded and attentive audience were present, who were highly gratified with the performances. The preacher, in a very happy and forcible manner, showed what constituted the true glory of a house of worship. We trust it will prove a word in season. Much credit is due to the young society, which is the result of the destruction of the former house by fire.

Our prospects are again encouraging, and it is humbly hoped, that this house may fulfil the end for which it was given, and prove "the gate of Heaven" to many precious souls.—Comm.

*MONDAY, JAN. 16.—In the Senate, a discussion arose on a motion to proceed in convention to choose a Senator, in place of Mr. Little, of Plymouth, who refused to inform the Senate whether or not he accepted the office of Senator, and still held his place in the House. Pending the discussion, a communication was received from Mr. Little, declining to accept the office of Senator. A debate then took place upon a motion to accept the resignation, Mr. Dickinson contending that the Senate had shown the Senate first must be filled up, and that so long as Mr. Little persisted in holding his seat in the House, without deciding to accept or decline his election as Senator, the action of the House on this subject must be delayed; while on the other side, it was contended, that, technically, the Senate had been filled, and that it was not for the House to inquire whether it was *actually* filled or not. Appeals were made to Mr. Little to qualify himself as Senator, and relieve the House of its difficulty. He, however, was unwilling, excepting that he once rose (with his hand) and said he meant to stay in the House until nearly 3 o'clock, when the House adjourned without taking any question.*

*TUESDAY, JAN. 10.—In the Senate, the bill regarding Gen. Jackson's fine was taken up, discussed, and again laid over.*

In the House, Mr. Botts brought forward, according to previous notice, charges of impeachment against President Tyler, for high crimes and misdemeanors, in abusing the appointing power, in retaining men in office after they had been rejected by the Senate, in corrupt abuse of the veto power, in being guilty of duplicit and falsehood with his former cabinet, &c. and proposed a resolution for a committee to inquire into the truth of the charges. After some discussion, chiefly between Mr. Botts and Mr. Wm. Whiting, a motion was made to postpone the bill, and a highly respectable man, the jury of inquiry had returned a verdict of *accidental death*.

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